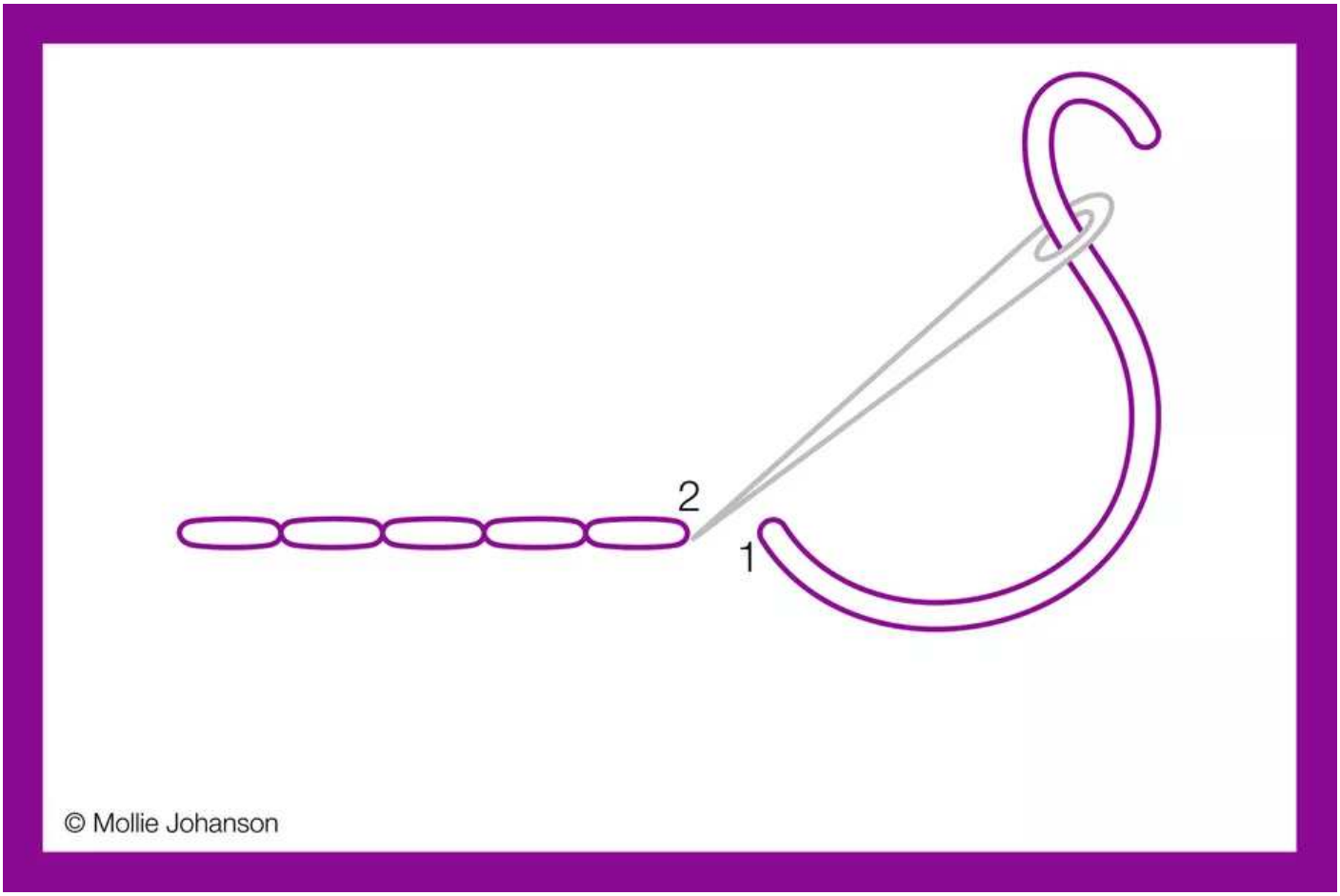
How to Work the Back Stitch in Embroidery

By CHERYL FALL | Updated on 06/29/20



Mollie Johanson

PROJECT OVERVIEW

SKILL LEVEL: Beginner

The backstitch is a basic outlining hand embroidery, cross stitch, and sewing stitch. When getting started in embroidery, it should be one of the first stitches you learn.

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Backstitching produces utlining in almost all
embroidery patterns. F ch or feather stitch, or
used it as a base for em r put it to practical use
and stitch two pieces of

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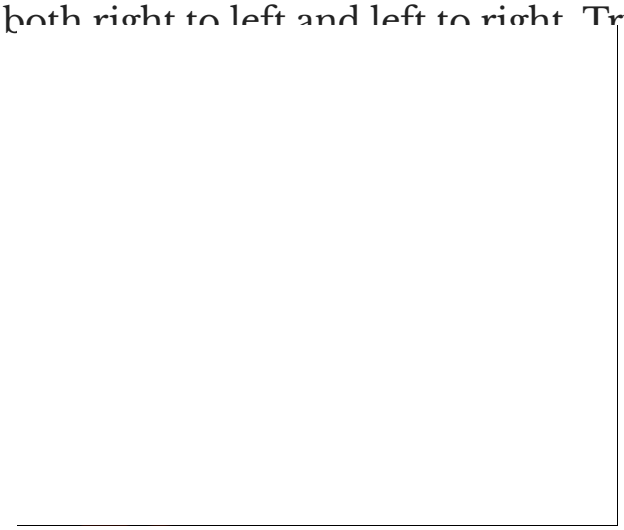
This stitch gets its name from the process, which results in each stitch going backward from the direction of the line you are forming. You can create the backstitch going from both right to left and left to right. Try it both ways!



Notes

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The instructions below Practice on a small square of cotton or oth les of type and size appropriate to the

What You'll Need

Equipment / To

- Embroidery hoop sized for practice cloth
- Embroidery needle, size between 1 and 5
-

Ruler

Materials

- Small square of cotton fabric for practicing
- Six-strand embroidery floss

Instructions

The stitches formed with a backstitch are made by bringing the needle up a stitch length away from the end of the previous stitch, and taking it down at the end near existing stitches, laying the thread on the surface of the work.

Although the backstitch is a basic stitch to learn, it takes practice to make the stitches even. The goal should be to train your eye to see how to space the stitches. For short lines, this might mean visually dividing the line into a certain number of stitches. Wit ompare your stitches as you go, and then div so you don't end up with a very tiny or very

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There are two methods for making stitches, the stabbing method and the sewing method. Give both of them a try to discover which is right for you.

01 Getting Ready

If you are still learning to stitch, go ahead and mark your fabric with a few practice lines. Use pencil.

Place the fabric in of six-strand embroidery floss a ry needle. Knot the other end.

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02 Stabbing Method

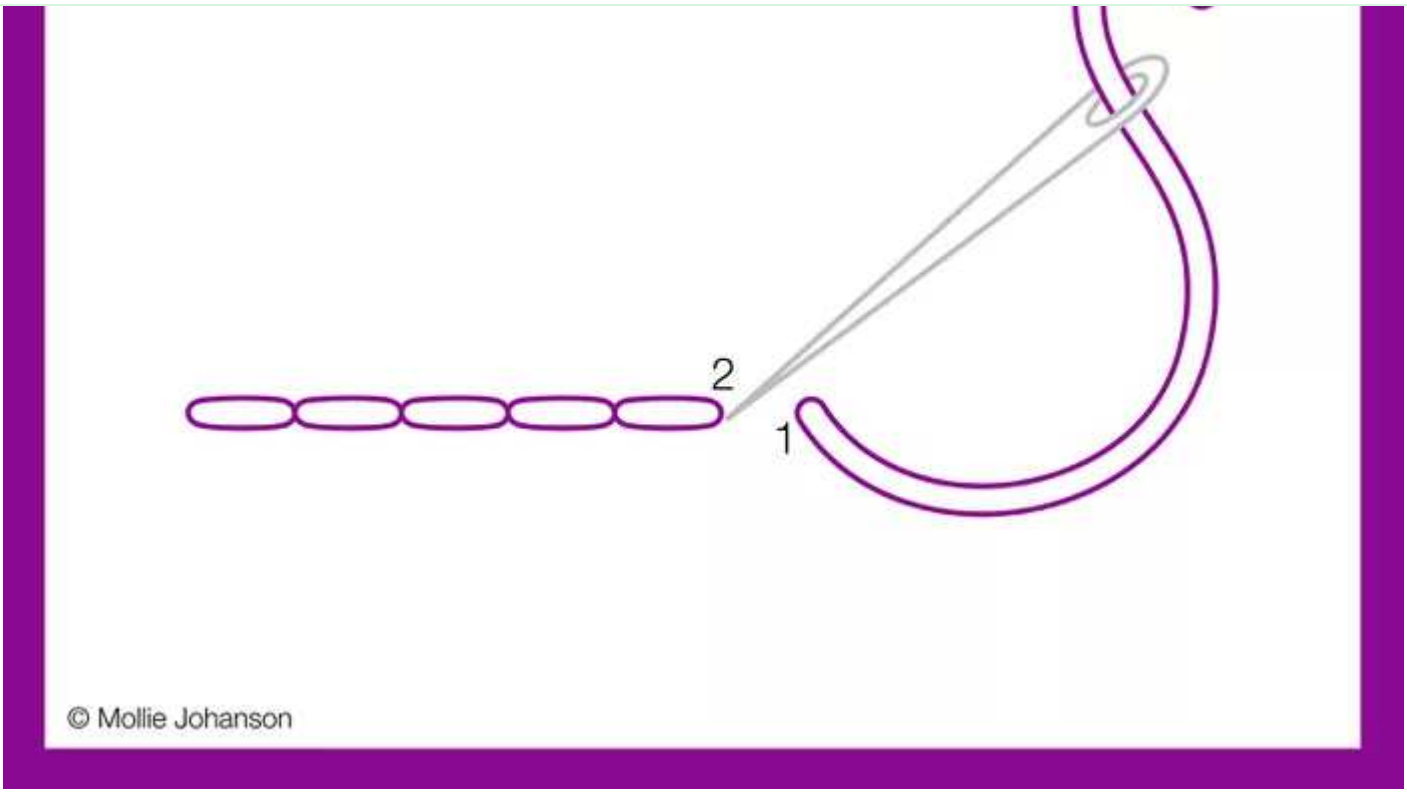
This technique is the preferred backstitch style for many embroiderers since it creates a tidy line, and the stabbing motion can help ensure an accurate stitch. As you stitch, move your stitching hand from the back of the fabric to the front of the work as needed.

To begin, bring the needle up through the back of the fabric slightly in front of where the stitching will begin (point 1).

01 Make a single stitch backward to the point where the stitching should begin (point 2) by inserting the needle front to back.

02 Bring the needle up a short distance from the first stitch on the line to the right. This will be the start of the second stitch (a new point 1; the old point 1 is the new point 2).

Continue stitching in the same manner, spacing the stitches at regular intervals, until you reach the end point of your line.



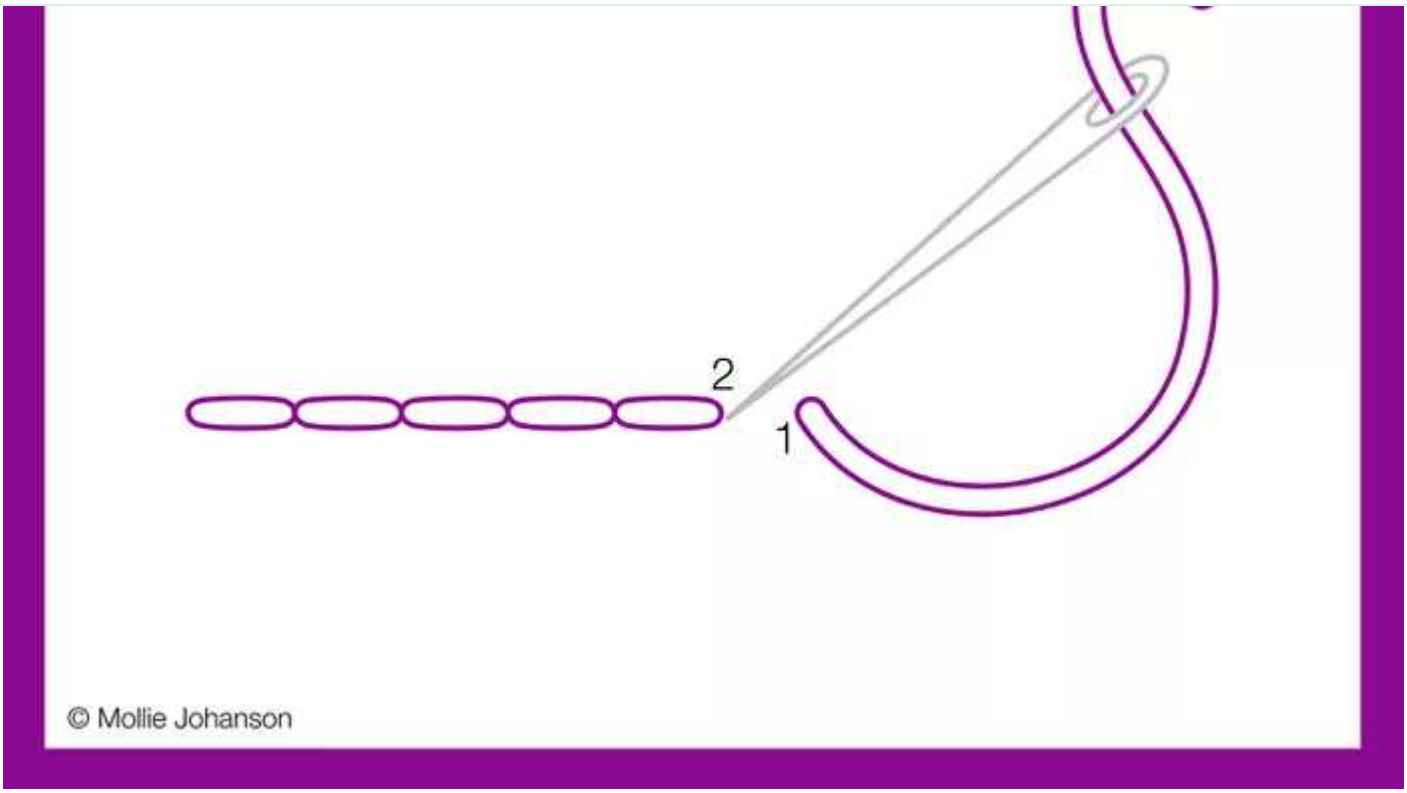
03 Sewing Method

In this technique, you will keep your needle on top of the fabric as you work, apart from dipping it to the back momentarily. This method is faster for some stitchers.

To begin, bring the needle up through the back of the fabric slightly in front of where the stitching will begin (point 1).

- Insert the needle at the point where the stitching should begin (point 2); without pulling the needle and thread all the way through the fabric, bring the needle up where the right end of the second stitch will be (new point 1; the old point 1 is the new point 2).

Continue stitching in the same manner, spacing the stitches at regular intervals, until you reach the end point of your line.



04 Practice

The first line taught you the mechanics of making the stitch. Make two more lines, one in each method, to see which is more natural to you.

More Ways to Experiment With Back Stitch

Backstitch can be embroidered in rows as a fill stitch. For this technique, you can stagger and overlap the stitches as though they are bricks. Or, you can choose to have each line repeat the same pattern. Similarly, you can make a thicker outline by stitching two rows of backstitch side by side. For example, use two lines of stitches to make thicker downstrokes on embroidered monograms, which will help to achieve the look of calligraphy. You can also make your backstitch a little more decorative by wrapping or weaving the stitches.

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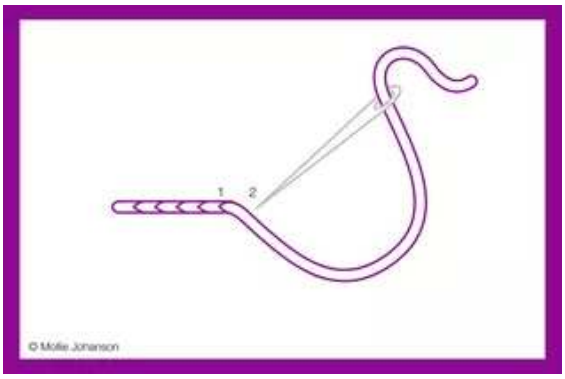

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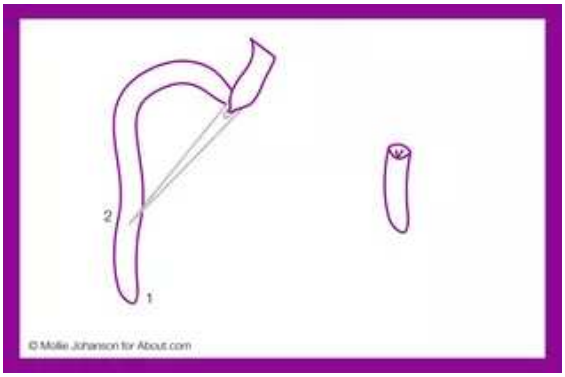

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